

BAY OF PLENTY



About Regional Skills Leadership Groups

The Government established independent Regional Skills Leadership Groups (RSLGs) to identify and support better ways of meeting the future skills and workforce needs of Aotearoa New Zealand's regions and cities. RSLGs are connecting with stakeholders, gathering labour market information, and providing advice to decision-makers in regions and central government. Functioning independently, the groups are locally based and regionally enabled, and supported by a team of data analysts, advisors and workforce specialists at the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment.

Members of RSLGs include regional industry leaders, economic development agencies, iwi/Māori, worker, community and government representatives, who contribute their knowledge and local expertise.

www.mbie.govt.nz/bay-of-plenty-rslg

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July 2023

ISBN:

Bay of Plenty Regional Workforce Plan
Print 978-1-991092-18-2
Online 978-1-991092-19-9



Bay of Plenty Regional Skills
Leadership Group
www.mbie.govt.nz/bay-of-plenty-rslg

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CO-CHAIR INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This document provides an update from the Bay of Plenty Regional Skills Leadership Group (RSLG) on its 2022 Regional Workforce Plan (RWP), which was launched in July 2022. It includes an overview of progress to date on the RWP actions and outcomes and introduces new areas of focus and investment advice to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) regarding potential funding of labour market programmes that have emerged over the past 12 months.

OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

The country is still experiencing a tight labour market, and productivity is being driven by inflation due to the continued financial impacts of the pandemic and other global economic pressures.

We also note the environmental and economic disruption caused by Cyclone Gabrielle in February, which has had a devastating impact felt by communities (including mental health concerns), industries (slowed economic activity), and the workforce (worker displacement/job losses) in other regions and throughout the Bay albeit to a lesser extent.

Although the last lockdown was in October 2021 (in Auckland), the effects of COVID-19 persist and are still negatively impacting our workforce and industry in the region. On the supply side, one significant issue is the large numbers of rangatahi (especially Māori) losing their education due to absenteeism. In some cases, there have been demands on students to bring income into the home because of sustained pandemic pressures. However, without an education this undermines resilience, foiling a young person's chance of acquiring the right skills in a learning environment, leading to meaningful participation in the labour market in the long run.

In response, a paradigm shift has been occurring in the Bay, involving secondary schools, tertiary and training providers, employers, and industry, all focused on the learner who is at the centre of a wraparound model, including a skills assessment of capability, allowing for the accurate placement of the individual on the right school-to-employment pathway.



Other long-term challenges that continue to impact training and education are driver licensing and digital access. Gaining a driver's license can be challenging in the Bay. This is because the area is dotted with rural locations, making it difficult for would-be learners to access driver license testing centres. Regarding digital access, while the Eastern Bay is particularly affected by a lack of infrastructure, parts of the Western Bay and Taupō are also experiencing such challenges. The dearth of connectivity is worrying as it presents an obstacle to participation in the education system and obstructs learning in affected areas. The RSLG has responded to these challenges in collaboration with those investing in digital infrastructure across the Bay area and driver licensing courses as part of Trade Academy offerings, coordinating people into relevant labour market programmes.

On the demand side, some sectors have been disproportionately impacted, with business closures and job losses. Much of the tourism industry was insulated from harm by domestic tourism, although this was not the case for the entire region.

With the border having opened back up, the situation has been improving, especially for those who are dependent on offshore visitors.¹ In the horticulture sector, kiwifruit and apple industries have undergone challenging times. As a result, this has impacted the wider ecosystem of the sector, for example, with the liquidation of PlanTech and a loss of 15 jobs².

The RSLG has responded to these demand implications by collaborating with those who invest in initiatives that help employers develop a holistic approach to recruiting, focusing on the skills they need and the strategies they use to retain staff until talent flows resume. For example, the Tauranga CBD Revitalisation project and the Aquaculture industry's progress in a harbour in Ōpōtiki and its own future skills pipeline.

OUR VISION FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

The RSLG is committed to realising the aspirations and actions set out in the RWP and achieving its associated outcomes, as set out in the summary of actions section.

The RWP's five aspirations Seasonality, Tech, Education, Climate Change, and Resilience form the pillars of our strategy and are based on the foundation of Mā te Māori, mō te Māori. We aim to promote equity in the workforce and achieve desired labour market outcomes for the region, as expanded in the priorities for the next 12 months' section.

To refine our strategy the Tertiary Education Commission has requested that each of the RSLGs working alongside the Workforce Development Councils, provide insight and advice around strategic workforce needs, emerging workforce trends or opportunities, and perennial mismatches in labour supply and demand to help guide and inform investment planning in regions.



Turi Ngatai
Co-Chair



Dr Chris Tooley
Co-Chair

The new spotlight areas we will zoom in on include the Māori economy and enterprise, school age rangatahi and Immigration.

CLOSING COMMENTS

This update reflects the Regional Skills Leadership Group's unwavering commitment to improve workforce outcomes for our communities and industry and provide excellent job opportunities across the Bay area.

Moving forward, we will focus on the equity component outlined in our Regional Workforce Plan's aspiration pillars and building resilience in our communities and industry to overcome the impacts of future events. The solid foundation for our work is and will remain Mā te Māori, Mō te Māori', reflecting the importance of partnership under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and underpinning the equitable outcomes we seek.

We also aim to use the Tertiary Education Commission investment case process to refine our workforce strategy and enhance our labour market performance by investing in relevant labour market programmes. Despite the ongoing effects of COVID-19 and the recent crisis caused by Cyclone Gabrielle, we remain determined to build better and more sustainable prospects for our people.

As always, we thank you, the reader, for staying engaged in this kaupapa with us. The mahi takes time and effort, and we remain mindful that it cannot be achieved without you, our regional partners, and friends.

1. [Bay of Plenty businesses looking forward to a busy summer with return of international tourists](#) | Bay of Plenty Times, 26 December 2022

2. [PlanTech enters liquidation](#) | Produce Plus, 9 November 2022

REGIONAL PROGRESS

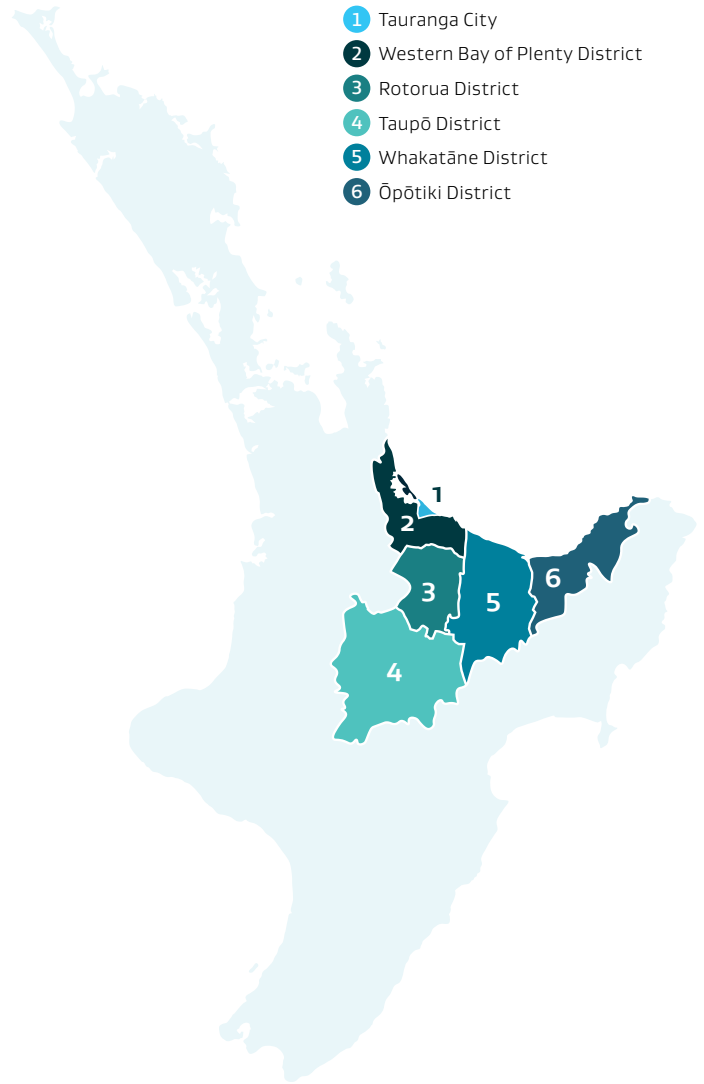
REGIONAL STORY

Growth in the Bay of Plenty region is once again occurring despite the recent limitations on the labour market, higher inflation, and concerns about lower economic activity as interest rates increase.

While increased activity points to good economic foundations, it also underscores the difficulty of taming inflation in a growing economy. The border reopening is supporting some sectors in the region, such as Tourism and Horticulture, that benefit from being connected to the world. However, the local construction and infrastructure sector is facing challenges in obtaining building materials, which drives up the cost of doing business.

One example of forward progress in the region is in Aquaculture. The sector is on track to establish a new primary industry, with the potential to develop 10,000ha to 20,000ha in seawater area, and create as much GDP and employment opportunities as Farming or Forestry. The harbour development at Ōpōtiki, the Whakatōhea Mussel's nearly 5,000ha of open ocean farms, and supporting processing facility, which employs approximately 180 people in total, are two examples. Several other initiatives are also underway, such as the development of Te Huata's Mussel Spat Hatchery and a resource consent application for the development of a 10,000ha Marine Farm located 4.8km off the coastline near Ohiwa Harbour. This activity generates significant economic activity, including increased employment in the region³.

The region's successes, challenges and priorities for the next twelve months are outlined on the following pages.



3. Bay of Plenty Aquaculture Strategy Stocktake for Bay of Plenty Aquaculture Group August 2022



SUCCESSSES

1. Improved coordination of labour market outcomes with government partners

The RSLG has been engaging with different agencies, including central government, to drive forward workforce planning through organisational plans, facilitating meaningful planning between communities and change leaders. This work has led to practical outcomes including Kanoa seeking input around how their proposals align with regional priorities. The Ngāi Tamarāwaho purpose-built contracting facility will be upgraded to tender for restoration and maintenance works on Kopurererua Valley Reserve in Gate Pā, Tauranga. The intention is for it to also win contracts with Waka Kotahi for works on the Northern Link. The flow on effect will be job creation and participation, particularly by Māori over the longer term.

2. Improved coordination with industry partners

The RSLG has convened Aquaculture, Horticulture and Forestry partners to generate action in terms of sharing labour resources more effectively. This includes rebalancing reliance away from migrant populations onto the local workforce. By way of example, in the kiwifruit industry, over 70 percent of the sector's permanent employees are locals. The wider industry is actively working to replicate this strategy within its seasonal workforce and is working with the RSLG, via its influencing role, to achieve this⁴.

3. Supporting Rangatahi, Māori and Pacifica

Collaboration between local iwi, schools, government agencies, and tertiary providers is proving successful in engaging and retaining students in meaningful learning. This is providing opportunities for work experience, employment, and future apprenticeships in local industry to promote a strong education-to-employment pathway. An example of an organisation that facilitates such scenarios, with input from the RSLG, is Ara Rau. A local investment whose vision statement includes a call to action to lift labour market outcomes, helping to prepare young people, placing them on the right skills to good job trajectory.

4. RSLGs are having an impact on labour markets by advocating for policy changes

One of the direct benefits of the regional coordination function is its ability to effectively use channels to influence central government via its reporting function. One example includes the RSLG influencing the immigration system, via a Local Insight Report, to better support the horticulture sector. For this sector this meant advocating successfully for an increase in RSE numbers to support the region's kiwifruit industry and ensure there were enough workers to help with the harvest.

4. Bay of Plenty Local Insights Report: March 2021



NEW ISSUES AND BARRIERS

1. Cyclone Gabrielle

On 14 February 2023, the New Zealand Government declared a National State of Emergency to assist in the response to Cyclone Gabrielle which caused significant impacts to the northern and eastern parts of the North Island, including Northland, Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Waikato, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay and Tararua. The National State of Emergency was extended on 27 February 2023 for a further seven days. The RSLG is staying engaged with sectors that are directly reliant on the environment to function, such as Horticulture via engagement with NZKGI to ensure situational awareness is maintained and action is provided via its coordination, influencing and advocacy role on any labour market implications.

2. Global economic conditions, inflation, and other financial pressures

Recent economic disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, extreme weather events, and the war in Ukraine have wreaked havoc on economies and societies across the world and contributed to higher inflation and cost of living pressures. Locally, this has translated into dampened business confidence, which negatively impacts the labour market, increasing the cost of doing business and global competition for skills and labour. This presents a persistent shortage of talent on Aotearoa New Zealand shores, affecting labour market capabilities and output continuities.

3. Schools are struggling with student retention

School attendance numbers have declined dramatically due to the pandemic, with some struggling to engage students in the school curricula. They are facing challenges such as self-esteem issues, low interest levels, and the demand to bring income into the home because of pandemic impacts. If low attendance levels are not addressed in terms of attracting and retaining young people in education, they miss placement onto future ready-to-work pathways.

4. Supply chain impacts

As a small, open, and geographically distant economy, Aotearoa New Zealand has benefited from integrating into global supply chains over the last three decades. However, recent events, including the Global Financial Crisis and Covid-19 pandemic have continuously disrupted the supply chains that industries (including workforces) and communities rely on. Firms, from large to local, have been working alongside governments to keep supply chains operational. However, disruption and change will continue as geopolitical, environmental, social, infrastructural, and health risks continue to emerge.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

Our priorities for the next 12 months are based on the aspirations and actions outlined in the RWP, as well as feedback received from stakeholders regarding new or different focus areas that are important for the RSLG.



SEASONALITY

The RSLG has a focus on seasonal market forces, including the peaks and troughs across sectors. We aim to promote greater access to a range of flexible, secure, and stable opportunities that individuals and whānau can tailor to suit their needs. The contract or piece nature of work, still has risks to worker conditions and our accompanying aim will be to support sectors and employers in mitigating this risk and combatting worker exploitation.



CLIMATE CHANGE

The RSLG is well positioned to engage with employers on climate change policy formation and compliance measures. We aim to get more employers on board to address the imputed costs of transitioning business practices into the circular economy model. With recent legislation requiring corporates to publicly disclose their carbon footprint,⁶ we believe there will be increased momentum from the commercial sector to participate in these discussions.



TECHNOLOGY

There are a range of opportunities in the region⁵ that the RSLG can promote more effectively to attract young people to the industry and build a local pipeline of skilled talent. However, small businesses in the region may struggle to take on junior talent due to a lack of access to skilled workers. We believe that the quality of life in the region can be a key selling point for attracting skilled workers.



RESILIENCE

We are prioritising our focus on the Māori economy and enterprise to promote Māori worker resilience (set out in more detail in the spotlight section). By supporting Māori employers (as well as all Māori workers across the region generally), we aim to future proof the labour market and attract more Māori workers. Additionally, we believe that lifting the skill levels and well-being of Māori workers will benefit the region.



EDUCATION

We recognise the importance of addressing the plummeting attendance rates among students and are looking to make improvements in the school-to-employment pathway. Rather than solely focusing on tertiary education and workforce development, we aim to foster learning in a unique way that addresses issues with numeracy and literacy and encourages students to stay engaged in the school curriculum (set out in more detail in the spotlight section).

Overall, we aim to address these priorities in the next 12 months through strategic initiatives and partnerships with stakeholders in the region.

5. Young Innovator Awards

6. Mandatory climate-related disclosures | Ministry for the Environment

NEW SPOTLIGHT AREAS

IMMIGRATION

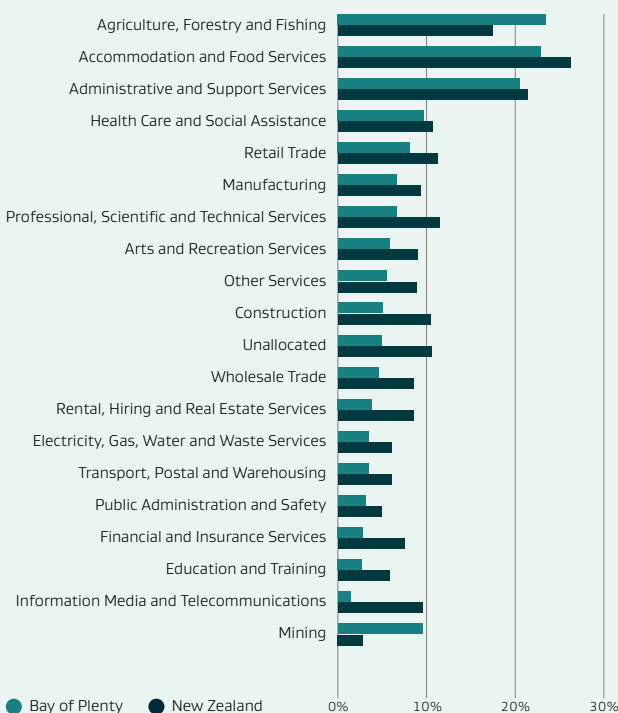
Key insights

Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the border closure, Aotearoa New Zealand experienced a net outflow of migrants and citizens. For instance, in 2021, there was a net loss of 15,000 people. This resulted in a reduction in the workforce across the whole country. However, by the second half of 2022, the situation began to change with a net migrant gain of 15,800⁷.

However, seasonal sectors such as horticulture and tourism need injections of labour during their peaks. Therefore, programmes like RSE are crucial to the region (see figure 1). Before the pandemic, approximately half of the horticulture workforce was made up of overseas workers. The impact of border closure was felt differently across different sub-regions. Some parts of the Bay of Plenty rely more on international tourism than others. For instance, Rotorua and Taupō, experienced an 81 per cent and 76 per cent drop in international spend, respectively, compared to this time last year, versus a 46 per cent drop for the Western BOP (as of August 2021)⁸.

Additionally, international education contributed \$180M to the local economy with 2,000 students studying in the region in 2019. However, by 2021 this had dropped to 813 students⁹. This drop in enrolments has caused uncertainty about the future of the region’s international education and the loss of skills from the sector.

FIGURE 1.
Migrant visas as percentage of employment



Our Approach

The RSLG has begun focusing more deeply on immigration and how it can be responsibly and appropriately leveraged to ensure that the Bay of Plenty is better supported with its skill needs while ensuring equity across the labour market for our local communities.

To support this, the RSLG plans to engage further with priority sectors mentioned above around implementation of immigration settings and with immigration policy advocating for improved methods to help close labour market skills gaps at the local level. RSLG has also been engaging with local regional councils, including around Welcoming Communities Plans in place for the Western Bay of Plenty and Tauranga City¹⁰ and Regional Partnership Agreements with Western Bay of Plenty Council, Tauranga City Council, Immigration New Zealand and Priority One¹¹ to drive forward workforce planning through council long-term plans and Immigration New Zealand.

7. Return to net migration gains in 2022 | Stats NZ, 16 February 2023
 8. Bay of Plenty Local Insights Report: October 2021
 9. Bay of Plenty Local Insights Report: October 2021
 10. Western Bay of Plenty Welcoming Communities Action Plan 2018 – 2020
 11. Western Bay of Plenty International Strategy 2019-2022 Summary Document

KEY RWP ASPIRATIONS AND ACTIONS THAT RELATE TO IMMIGRATION

Seasonality aspiration

By identifying peaks and troughs and collaborating across sectors we hope to promote greater access to a range of flexible, secure, and stable opportunities that individuals/whānau can tailor to suit their needs. Due to the contract/piecemeal nature of the work, there is the potential for risk to worker conditions, and an accompanying aim will be to support sectors/employers to mitigate this risk and combat worker exploitation¹².

Seasonality actions

Undertake research to build a complete picture of the seasonality patterns across Bay of Plenty (including migrant workers) to confirm if under-employment is an opportunity area¹³.

One potential way to confirm if there are unnecessary barriers to optimal use of skills is to look into the recent example of Cyclone Gabrielle and how migrant skills were leveraged to alleviate pressure on the horticulture sector.

The RSLG has been engaging with the policy review of the RSE scheme and is aware that system changes are being considered including how to determine the number of RSE workers needed to fill the labour market needs of the industry¹⁴.

New Recommendation

As part of the research action noted above, the RSLG will work to gain a clearer current understanding of how immigration is performing cross-regionally and cross-industry via data insights, sector engagement (including collation of regional plans/strategies). Use analysis to produce actionable insights to then advocate for policy that supports balanced and targeted immigration outcomes for the region.

12. Seasonality | Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

13. Seasonality | Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

14. Cyclone Gabrielle: Immigration Minister Michael Wood urgently reviewing whether tweak needed to RSE scheme | Newshub, 22 February 2023



MĀORI BUSINESS

Key insights

Māori employers and businesses provide employment for Māori workers.

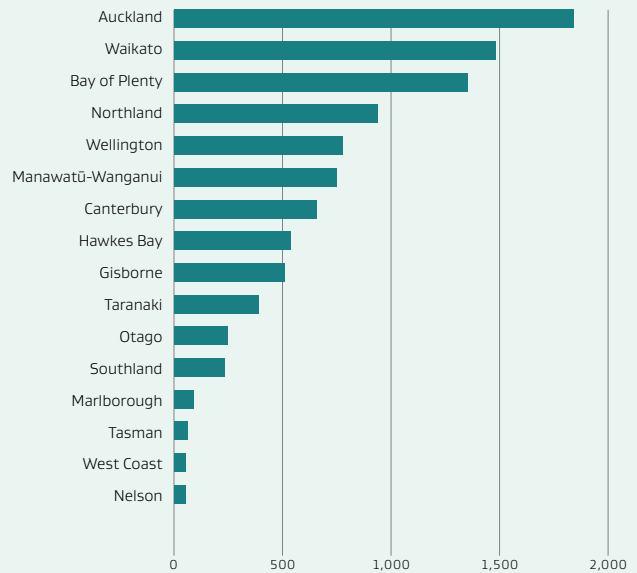
While “fishing, farming, and forestry” still dominate in terms of revenue, Māori businesses have diversified dramatically in the past two decades to include film, fashion, food, and a range of other enterprises across industries¹⁵. Construction has also been identified as a significant employer of Māori in the Bay of Plenty.

The region is the third highest employer across the motu (behind Auckland and Waikato) with 1,347 individual employers in 2020 (figure 2)¹⁶ representing around 12 per cent of all regional employers. Given the upward trajectory of the Māori economy, it makes sense to move alongside this growth and look to build greater capability for Māori businesses.

Māori-owned businesses are important in employing a large proportion of the Māori population. Employment is a meaningful part of belonging to society and contributes to whānau thriving as well as wellbeing.¹⁹

FIGURE 2.

Significant employers of Māori by Regional Council



Our approach

Over the past year the RSLG formed several partnerships throughout the region with community-based providers such as the Manawa Work for Life Centre and the Rotorua Youth Centre.

These partnerships were established to build overall understanding and a knowledge base around workforce resilience, particularly for rangatahi, with the longer-term plan of sharing this knowledge regionally to facilitate¹⁷ improvement in industry knowledge about how to support Māori workers (including examples and case studies of good practices from across the region)¹⁸. However, while this work has provided useful insights and information on approaches to support Māori youth and workers, the conversations also highlighted that Māori businesses need support as well.

15. Māori businesses have multiple aspirations | Newsroom, 21 February 2022

16. Te Matapaeroa 2020 | Te Puni Kōkiri

17. Resilience | Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

18. Resilience | Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

19. Te Matapaeroa 2020 | Te Puni Kōkiri, 21 February 2022

One clear path to supporting Māori businesses is by looking more closely into social procurement to assess whether current approaches work for Māori. Deloitte identified the following in 2020:

“In addition to increasing the number of jobs for Māori people, an indigenous procurement policy might also create a Māori employment updraft, helping Māori to attain more highly paid and senior roles in the job market. Social procurement would also naturally support the development of Māori businesses as more targeted opportunities arise to tender for government contracts.”²⁰”

The key reason the RSLG wants to focus on social procurement is not due to the lack of procurement pipelines for Māori businesses, but due to the challenges around these businesses accessing pipelines, in particular the procedural requirements to avail themselves of said opportunities. The RSLG wants to focus on options to improve capability and what options exist to streamline processes.

The RSLG knows there is already good work underway in the region regarding this mahi and intends to leverage the expertise of agencies that are already engaged with Māori businesses, such as [Te Puni Kōkiri](#), [Amotai](#) and others who have a background working with Māori businesses and understand the nuances of working with them and the issues they face around social procurement. The Group is delighted for instance to see events like the “Meet the buyers” event sponsored by Priority One and Amotai in March this year²².

KEY RWP ASPIRATIONS AND ACTIONS THAT RELATE TO MĀORI BUSINESS

Resilience aspiration

Enable workforce resilience across individuals, communities, and industries by partnering with and coordinating between Iwi/hapū, industry groups, employers, and government agencies.

Resilience action

Co-ordinate between those who provide support to Māori workers in the community and the employers who recruit them to find ways to improve workforce resilience (e.g., through sharing good employer models of pastoral care, transition planning and support for their workforce).

New Recommendation

As part of the resilience action noted above the RSLG will work to gain a clearer understanding of how social procurement is positively impacting Māori businesses and identify options to improve and streamline support for Māori employers in this regard.

“The Government’s new 8% target for the number of public service contracts awarded to Māori businesses is a great start. To achieve its full potential will require deliberate action to build capability on both sides of the procurement equation. This means providing culturally appropriate support to Māori businesses to participate in government procurement, as well as training staff in procuring agencies.”²¹”

20. How social procurement can address inequities in Aotearoa | Deloitte

21. Insights from Māori frontier firms | Cut to the Chase, April 2021

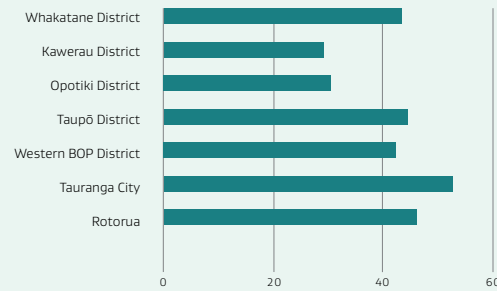
22. Empowering Māori and Pasifika Businesses: Driving Regional Development Through Social Procurement | Priority One, 8 March 2023

RANGATAHI ENGAGEMENT (SCHOOL-AGED)

Key insights

The average regular attendance numbers in secondary schools across the Bay of Plenty has been declining, from 63 per cent in 2015 to 57 per cent in 2021, and by the end of 2022, it had dropped further to 39 per cent²³. This has significant workforce implications, as students who leave school without relevant skills continue to struggle to transition from low skilled jobs²⁴. This is reinforced by feedback from the Employers and Manufacturers Association’s 2018 survey, where 57 per cent of employers were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the work-readiness of school leavers, and only 4 per cent were very satisfied or satisfied with candidates. The pandemic has deepened the school attendance problem in certain parts of the region and communities, with some students not wanting to reconnect with the school system due to self-esteem issues and a lack of interest, resulting in “lost learning” in numeracy and literacy (figure 3)²⁵. That being said the Group is pleased that the Government is re-prioritising maths and literacy learning via new assessments from next year, while slowing timeframes of other changes to NCEA.

FIGURE 3.
Regular attendance data 2022 (Term 4)



- 23. [Raising school attendance an uphill battle](#) | Infometrics, 24 November 2022
- 24. [Bay of Plenty Local Insights Report: September 2022](#)
- 25. [He Whakaaro: How COVID-19 is affecting school attendance](#) | Education Counts, December 2020



Nic Newman

Our Approach

The RSLG views this challenge as a crucial one to consider for the long-term health of the region's workforce and the future of our rangatahi and their communities. We recognise that it's a multi-organisational challenge, and no single agency can solve or alleviate it alone. The RSLG needs to look back down the education-to-employment pipeline to mitigate workforce challenges upstream.

Within our overall approach the Group will be looking for good examples that demonstrate cross-agency collaboration that it can use to highlight how exactly the region can mobilise together. Such as the Grow Hub facility which is industry-funded and operates on the grounds of Katikati College. It is noted as an excellent innovative learning model providing education, skills, and training pathways to the region's young people into all aspects of the horticulture industry²⁶.

To this end, the RSLG wants to:

1. Convene relevant agencies around a common mission statement.

2. Leverage models of student engagement that work in an appropriate way.

3. Over the next 12 months, review the education approach in the RWP, pivoting from an overly bureaucratic approach to a more practical one, to improve attendance numbers within our schools and, therefore, education-to-employment pathways.

KEY RWP ASPIRATIONS AND ACTIONS THAT RELATE TO RANGATAHI ENGAGEMENT

Education aspiration

Bay of Plenty residents can participate in flexible education and training that transcends location and personal circumstance barriers and connects with the needs of whānau and community. Training should connect the aspirations of employers and rangatahi and those re-training to facilitate a smooth education-to-employment pathway.

Education actions

Support place-based transition programmes that pathway residents from education to training, employment, or higher education.

New Recommendation

As part of the process of reviewing the overall direction of the education approach within the RWP, the RSLG will reframe actions (over the next 12 months) to include the challenge around school attendance. The action should include a more agile and inclusive process of collaboration with key relevant agency partners based on the government's Attendance and Engagement Strategy, June 2022²⁷.

26. Katikati Innovative Horticulture Project

27. Attendance and Engagement Strategy | Ministry of Education, June 2022

LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS

This section provides a brief overview of the areas covered by the Bay of Plenty RSLG's advice to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). The full advice paper, including a list of all stakeholders consulted, is available at [Bay of Plenty TEC Advice 2023](#).

Throughout this year, the RSLG has examined the tertiary education needs of several key sectors in the region, including a high-performing primary industry that benefited from strong global demand for food during the pandemic. The region also boasts significant employment in construction, health, and professional services, as well as a small yet high-performing tech sector.

In April of this year, the RSLG provided advice to the TEC on the assessment of key labour market skills shortages across these sectors and some others (full list noted below) that warrant future investment in tertiary training and education. In developing this advice, the RSLG consulted with over 65 stakeholders at a feedback hui held over February–March. Stakeholders ranged from employers, industry associations, tertiary providers, Iwi and hapū organisations, community groups, and local and central government. While the [six Workforce Development Councils \(WDC\)](#) each provided national sector-specific advice, the RSLG offered a regional sector lens to tertiary education advice to inform the TEC of the skills needed to help close labour market gaps.

The “regional workforce outlook” aims to provide the tertiary education system, as well as other partners, with a reference or outline of what each RSLG considers a labour market area of priority or importance. It identifies strategically important workforce needs for the region, any emerging trends or opportunities that impact the workforce, and any perennial mismatches in labour supply and demand.

SECTOR SPECIFIC

The advice covered labour market gaps and critical long-term shortages (high, mid, and low-level skill shortages – some examples provided below) for the following key sectors:

Horticulture

High-level skills include laboratory technicians, and low-level skills include pickers and packers.

Forestry and wood processing

Mid-level skills includes machine operators.

Aquaculture

Mid-level skills includes skippers and marine crane operators.

Technology

High-level skills includes business analysts and cybersecurity professionals.

Construction and infrastructure

High-level skills includes engineers, and low-level skills include drainlayers.

Professional services

High-level skills includes finance/business analyst, accountants, functional analyst, project management and change managers

KEY THEMES

The advice also covered several key cross-cutting themes:

- Literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy
- Wrap-around pastoral care
- Incremental training through micro-credentials
- Cross sector skills/qualifications

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS ALIGNMENT

Below is a list of areas where the RSLG and WDC's align:

Muka Tangata

The importance of pastoral care to support pre-employment and new employees in primary industry sectors, as well as those wanting to step into leadership. Leadership training, preferably short courses, is necessary.

Toimai

Agreement with Toimai that digital literacy skills are crucial as the key step at the front end of the staircase. Focus needs to be placed on this point to ensure a future pipeline for digital competency workers as automation impacts over the next 10 years.

Waihanga Ara Rau

Agreement with Waihanga Ara Rau that further funding is needed in construction and infrastructure for re-employment programmes for career changers, on-the-job training, and practical work-based apprenticeships, as well as pastoral care and basic life skills support like literacy and numeracy.

Hanga Aro Rau

There is alignment around some technology-centric skills training, particularly standardised pathways to develop computer numerical control skills and standardised pathways to develop robotic welding skills, as well as digital skills that enable workers to engage with automation, digital systems, and data collection.

Ringa Hora

The RSLG supports the efforts of Ringa Hora to streamline entry points into service sector roles and agrees that greater support is needed for entry-level management training. The focus should be on targeting workers currently employed in the service sector to improve the overall capability of the workforce.

The above list outlines the alignment between the RSLG and five of the six WDC's. The RSLG is yet to identify areas of alignment with Toitū te Waiora.



TĀNGATA AOTEAROA NGĀ WAWATA



SEASONALITY

- Research and build a complete picture of whānau, hapū, iwi and hapori Māori labour patterns.
- Identify potential Māori groups/clusters that could develop in-house micro-credential programmes.
- Develop a business case for a Tuakana-Teina programme that ensures rangatahi Māori flourish with the guidance of pakeke and kaumātua.
- Provide resources to whānau, hapū, iwi and hapori Māori to research and assess/analyse issues, problems and barriers.



DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

- Support and resource hapū, iwi and hapori to grow their workforce digital capability through increasing availability and access to tailored industry led micro-credential training designed by employers and delivered in the workplace.



EDUCATION

- The RSLG encourages whānau, hapū, iwi and hapori Māori to work with the collective impact group and BOPTIS partners to refresh map of current tertiary education provision in BOP.
- He Pou Tāngata o Aotearoa partners inform/ co-design with local place-based providers to create a stocktake/map of place-based transition programmes in the BOP that pathway residents from education to training, employment or higher education.
- RSLG partners with hapū and iwi to consider the findings from Bay of Plenty Tertiary Intentions.
- Strategy and identifies any outstanding recommendations regarding transitions support and pathways that the RSLG can support for delivery.
- Support hapū and iwi and hapori Māori communities to seek wider provision and uptake of MSD licensing programmes.



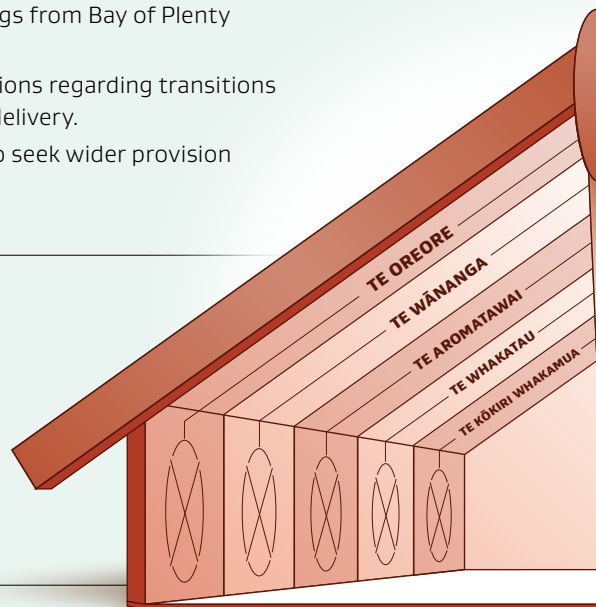
CLIMATE CHANGE

- Enable and facilitate climate adaptation and workforce resilience discussions between Iwi, community, and industry to identify actions they can take now.



RESILIENCE

- Partner with Iwi/hapū and Māori employers around their approaches to worker support and look for opportunities to improve Māori resilience. This may include supporting growth and scaling of their efforts.



Regional Workforce Context

Our Regional Workforce Whare comprises two sides or pou made up of Tāngata Aotearoa (whānau; hapū; iwi and Māori communities); and Tāngata Niu Tireni (everyone else, including Māori communities in the context of Article 3 of Te Tiriti).

TĀNGATA NIU TĪRENI ASPIRATIONS

- Research to build a complete picture of the seasonality patterns across BOP to then validate if under-employment is an issue or an opportunity.
- Identify potential groups/clusters that could develop in-house micro-credential programmes.
- Develop a business case for a mentor/learner in-house programme; with older workers sharing skills/learning with newer/younger workers.
- Research to better identify what the real and perceived barriers are.



SEASONALITY

- Grow workforce digital capability through increasing availability and access to tailored industry-led, micro-credential training designed by employers and delivered in the workplace.



DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

- RSLG works with proposed collective impact group and BOPTIS partners to refresh map of current tertiary education provision in BOP.
- RSLG works with local place-based providers to create a stocktake map of place-based transition programmes in the BOP that pathways residents from education to training, employment or higher education.
- RSLG considers the findings from Bay of Plenty Tertiary Intentions Strategy and identifies any outstanding recommendations regarding transitions support and pathways that the RSLG can support for delivery, e.g. Education New Zealand's pathways mapping portal.
- Support wider provision and uptake of licensing programmes.



EDUCATION

- Facilitate climate adaptation and workforce resilience discussions between iwi, community and industry to identify actions they can take now; including education and employment related actions e.g linking rangatahi to relevant tertiary courses, scholarships, internships, and work experience.



CLIMATE CHANGE



- Partner with Iwi/hapū and Māori employers around their approaches to worker support and look for opportunities to improve Māori resilience. This may include supporting growth and scaling of their efforts.






RESILIENCE

The actions listed on this page as well as the full list of actions (immediate, short, medium and long) are set out on pages 38-43 of the 2022 Regional Workforce Plan on [our website](#).

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS PROGRESS OVERVIEW

	ACTION (GROUP/THEME)	OUTCOMES/ANTICIPATED OUTCOME	PROGRESS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS
ACTIONS COMPLETE	 CLIMATE CHANGE	<p>Engaged in climate change wānanga with Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whakaue ki Maketu at the end of 2021. Ngāti Whakaue ki Maketu has developed a comprehensive and impressive climate adaptation plan. The aim of this engagement was to begin conversation with an Iwi partner who is actively engaged in climate change discussions to create a closer link to workforce impacts. Currently, there is little to no consideration of the workforce in climate change plans/strategies or discussions in the region.</p> <p>The RSLG provided the workforce component during wānanga held over a 3-month period to foster awareness in the community on the workforce implications of climate change. The Group is looking to encourage such partnerships in other sub-regions.</p>	<p>RSLG has also been engaging with other regional Iwi but beginning to widen the scope to industry and local council. With Council the aim is to drive forward workforce planning through council long term plans. This discussion was started at the Bay of Connections Leadership Group hui highlighting key RWP climate change actions for the group and will facilitate meaningful planning between communities and current/future BOP climate change adaptation leaders.</p>
	 RESILIENCE	<p>Engaged with Work for Life centre and the Rotorua Youth Centre to get perspective on their approach – surfaced their insights in the RWP.</p> <p>Co-ordinated with Kanoa on proposals that supported Māori employers. The Group made recommendations around how to support worker resilience and provided insights to Kanoa around workers support and pastoral care for two proposals over the previous 12 months.*</p>	<p>The Group has been engaged in widening the scope of agencies who are working in the field of workforce resilience. Right now, the focus on breaking new ground has been in Rotorua at the Rotorua Youth Centre. The centre is very interested in exploring how to improve and support rangatahi workforce resilience by getting our young people into “good jobs”.</p>

	ACTION (GROUP/THEME)	OUTCOMES/ANTICIPATED OUTCOME	PROGRESS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS
ACTIONS IN PROGRESS	 SEASONALITY	<p>Complete research that will support and inform regional workforce planning for seasonal sectors. Findings will evidence the case for labour sharing and address barriers that obstruct the seasonal workforce in terms of transitioning between roles and gaining new skills.</p>	<p>A business case has been drafted in collaboration with MPI and Te Uru Rakau seeking funding towards a research project on seasonality to garner opportunities to help close labour market gaps by building resilient workforce pipelines.</p> <p>The RSLG developed the business case in conjunction with regional sectors: Horticulture, Aquaculture and Forestry and government departments. Part of the activity was around collating current research on seasonality in the region.</p>
	 TECHNOLOGY	<p>Provided April advice to the TEC advocating for a micro-credential/training that harnesses gamification to attract rangatahi to technology using something they are already interested in.</p> <p>Digital infrastructure: Address the lack of adequate Eastern Bay of Plenty digital infrastructure in collaboration with regional stakeholders. This will remove obstacles to participation in the education system and obstructs learning in affected areas.</p>	<p>Partnering with WDC Toimai to engage Rotorua based Digital Natives to look at the efficacy of that training provider model and capturing and articulating the model towards recommendations for TEC.</p> <p>Produced a phased business case around digital infrastructure for the Eastern Bay of Plenty and initiated collaboration with the EBOP Workforce Action Network to look at ways to fund the proposal. If funding is received, this will remove obstacles to participation in the labour market and education system and obstructs learning in affected areas.</p>
	 EDUCATION	<p>A complete stocktake map of transition programmes that pathway people into training or employment.</p> <p>Support wider provision and uptake of licensing programmes.</p>	<p>The Group has convened a range of TEOs over the past 12 months to discuss transition programmes and the process of building a stocktake is underway, see Labour Market Insights section: TEC Advice.</p> <p>The process of supporting wider provision and uptake of licensing programmes is a slow one. The Group is currently interfacing with a wide range of stakeholders operating in this space. To date “Driving for Change” has been one of the stakeholders that is supporting this mahi.</p>

* The RWP contains an action under this pou that dealt with the income insurance scheme. The action was aimed at insuring that the system of worker support around the scheme was well thought out and went beyond mere financial provision for those out of work. As the scheme is no longer being developed this action is now defunct.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

One of the priorities will be to bring industry (e.g., primary sector) into the discussion much more sharply. RSLG is well placed to have such conversations with employers who have a stake in climate change policy formation and compliance measures and getting more of them on board, so they are not left behind.

This will be done via a more concerted effort to roll out climate adaptation and workforce resilience discussions (including the promotion of exemplar firms e.g., Scion who has embraced climate change requirements) across the region with sectors to encourage individuals/businesses to transition into becoming future ready for work.

The RSLG is gearing up the resilience discussion for other regions outside the Eastern Bay of Plenty. Active discussions are on-going with the Rotorua Youth Centre on how to improve resilience across the workforce amongst our young people however this could be supported by capturing proposed solutions within a local insight report or some other format potentially advocating for the cause to central government.

LESSONS LEARNT SINCE LAST UPDATE

Most communities are interested in the more immediate impacts such as environmental and events that affect them personally rather than the workforce implications of Climate Change.

Coupling this with the volume of information that climate change covers as a topic and the fact that the region is thin on the ground on climate change expertise and knowledge means having clear and meaningful conversations across the region is challenging. The key appears to be the ability to translate discerned information into simpler terms and provide easy to understand terms, accessibility, and awareness.

The key learning around workforce resilience that the Group extracted from engagements with regional stakeholders pertained to extending our focus beyond the individual worker and out to the sectors and employers. The Group is now looking to support the growth of the Māori economy. The realisation driving this is that because Māori employ Māori (“for Māori by Māori”) and a greater focus on supporting Māori enterprise is a clear way to support resilience.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

The business case developed for seasonality research will be submitted to the Food & Fibre CoVE in 2023, seeking funding, in line with its funding cycle. A sub-group for seasonality has been formed as part of the RSLG (first meeting, November 2022) comprising. Aquaculture NZ, NZKGI, Te Uru Rākau, the Forestry Workforce Council and Muka Tangata. Over the next 6 months the membership will be grown to include Tourism BOP and Horticulture NZ. The sub-group will help advance implementation of seasonality actions via the Regional Workforce Plan.

Pushing ahead with the infrastructure business case to see if there are any regionally based avenues for getting towers erected to leverage school bandwidth.

Working with EDA partners to develop other ways of increasing the profile of tech careers to young people throughout the Bay of Plenty. This will create awareness and potentially attract people into the industry.

LESSONS LEARNT SINCE LAST UPDATE

This is a significantly larger project than initially thought. It became clear early on that relying on MBIE/the RSLG secretariat would not be sufficient to deliver the action. The focus moved to sourcing regional funding to carry out research and deliver on this action.

While the approach of looking into micro-credentials and training remains a focus for the Group – another equally important focus has arisen for the RSLG. One idea it would like to follow the thread on is how to showcase what the industry is already doing in a much more impactful way – the Group wants to look at how it can avoid re-inventing the wheel and leverage intelligently attracting individuals to the industry and help build a local pipeline of future skilled labour.[‡]

The Group focus will be to attempt a new way of engaging the full spectrum of stakeholders interested in education in an efficient manner. Feedback from the region is that we need to engage industry with educators in a better way. At this point the Group does not know what this looks like – however we do realise the solution lies in the problem that we are currently scoping with the Ministry of Education.

Re-evaluate towards moving away from a bureaucratic model around how we converse with our region on its education needs. The Group wants to pivot to a more agile approach and move to smaller groups or engagements with end users. This will for the discovery of where the needs of the community lie.

[‡] Note: Within this approach the Group is considering the opportunities the new Digital Technologies Industry Transformation Plan might provide.

BAY OF PLENTY REGIONAL SKILLS LEADERSHIP GROUP

Co-Chairs



Turi Ngatai



Dr Chris Tooley

Regional Public Service Commissioner



Ezra Schuster

Members



Rick Keehan



Karl Gradon



Louisa Jones



Anthony Campbell



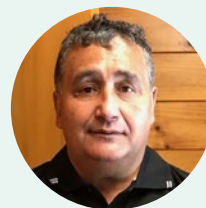
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